



## Chapter 4 by Jonathan Talley



The darkness surrounded me like an thick blanket. The place wreaked of mold and smoke. Although it had been ten years since the fire, it still smelled like death. The fire had been so intense it warped the main steel support columns forcing the City of Grove to condemn the entire building. Many residents wanted the place razed. Me, I wanted answers.

During the fire many patients burned alive while locked in their cells. Their screams and pleads for help still haunted me. I had an overwhelming sense of guilt for not trying to help them.

I tapped the flashlight against my hand but it failed to respond. The temperature was dropping. I hadn't notice it on the way in, but now, standing in complete darkness, alone, anxious, and regretting my decision to return to this awful place, I felt cold. I instantly missed the security of the flashlight. Every rational thought in my mind told me to leave and never come back. I'd already been through enough and barely escaped the fire years earlier, but something kept driving me to figure things out. For some strange reason, I felt connected to this place and I hated myself for it.

## Chapter 5 by Jody Cheng



Ironic, isn't it? An asylum is meant to help with your mental state but it just drives you closer to the brink of insanity.

A heart-wrenching sob came from somewhere ahead. I thought this place was abandoned. I tried to walk away, knowing that this was my last chance at sanity. But I was drawn to the sound. I walked ahead, groping my way through the darkness. And that's when I fell.

## Chapter 6 by 154.-



Down, down, it felt like I was never going to stop. If I was wearing a dress, it would have danced around my ankles. The sobs continued, swirling around my head, coming closer and travelling further away. It reminded me of one of my recurring nightmares, and I started to sob, the

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breathing in the sobbing, and so much time passed that I couldn't tell you when the sobbing changed to a cackling.

"You're finally back. I missed you." A voice spoke from the darkness, and I jumped. It sounded young, sweet - but the most chilling thing about it was that I recognised it. Her voice hadn't changed - not in ten years alone in this pit.

## Chapter 7 by m a r i e



I looked around, trying to pinpoint where her voice was coming from.

## Chapter 8 by Lydia Mize



Suddenly, everything looked new again as if awakening out of a bad dream. Tears still blotted around my eyes. I looked around in awe. The building was restored. I didn't need my flashlight and could not remember where I had placed it. The sweet voice in the distance was becoming clear to me now and as I looked down the hall I saw her walking towards me wailing in excitement and disbelief, "It's you, really you!" My heart raced, "Yes, it's me!" I ran towards her, "But you? How did you get here? This place is gone!" Although, I was standing in a freshly white painted hallway with lights brighter than daylight. I could see workers in their lab coats and uniforms scaling from room to room. Peaking in to check on each patient.--My eyes fell back on her lovely face, "you, you were left in the fire, dear... This isn't real." Shaking my furiously I felt an ache in my chest but she still stood there before me. That smile and grace gripping and pulling me in.

the end

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